

The embodiments of the invention in which an exclusive property right or privilege is claimed are defined as follows:

1. An undercarriage for transporting a stretcher, said undercarriage comprising:  
a support base adapted for supporting a stretcher, said support base having an open compartment and defining an upper plane bounded by an upper surface of said support base and a lower plane bounded by a lower surface of said support base;  
5 a first pair of legs pivotally mounted to the support base, each of said first pair of legs comprising a forward leg;  
a second pair of legs pivotally and slidably mounted to the support base, each of said second pair of legs comprising a rearward leg, said first pair of legs being independently pivotal about said support base from said second pair of legs;  
10 a journaled member provided at the distal ends of each leg; and  
a control system adapted to selectively pivot said first pair of legs to a stowed position and to selectively pivot said second pair of legs to a stowed position, and said control system further adapted to selectively lengthen or shorten said legs to adjust the height of said support base.
2. The undercarriage according to Claim 1, wherein said stowed position of said first pair of legs is between said upper and lower planes.
3. The undercarriage according to Claim 1, wherein said stowed position of said second pair of legs is between said upper and lower planes.
4. The undercarriage according to Claim 1, wherein said second pair of legs at least partially extend into said open compartment when moved to their stowed position.
5. The undercarriage according to Claim 1, wherein said support base includes a plurality of journaled members, said journaled members of said support base enabling a person move said undercarriage across a support surface when said support base is extended over the support surface.

6. The undercarriage according to Claim 5, wherein a group of said journaled members are located at a forward end of said support base to form forward journaled members.

7. The undercarriage according to Claim 5, wherein a group of said journaled members of said support base are located forward of said rearward legs and rearward of said forward legs to form intermediate journaled members wherein said intermediate journaled members provide support for said undercarriage when said forward legs are pivoted to their  
5 stowed position to thereby ease handling of said undercarriage.

8. The undercarriage according to Claim 7, wherein said undercarriage has a center of gravity, said intermediate journaled members located at or near said center of gravity.

9. The undercarriage according to Claim 7, wherein said undercarriage has a center of gravity, said intermediate journaled members are located rearward of said center of gravity.

10. The undercarriage according to Claim 1, wherein said control system includes a plurality of actuators, said actuators pivoting and adjusting the length of said legs.

11. The undercarriage according to Claim 10, wherein said actuators comprise cylinders.

12. The undercarriage according to Claim 11, wherein said cylinders comprise hydraulic cylinders.

13. The undercarriage according to Claim 10, each of said legs includes a pivot actuator and a height adjustment actuator wherein said pivoting and said adjusting the length of said legs is independent.

14. The undercarriage according to Claim 13, wherein said adjustment actuators are coupled.

15. The undercarriage according to Claim 14, wherein said actuators comprise hydraulic cylinders.

16. The undercarriage according to Claim 15, wherein said cylinders are hydraulically coupled.

17. An undercarriage for transporting a stretcher, said undercarriage comprising:  
a support base adapted for supporting a stretcher, said support base having a frame;

a first pair of legs pivotally mounted to opposed sides of said frame, each of  
5 said first pair of legs comprising a forward leg;

a second pair of legs pivotally and slidably mounted to said frame and being  
extendible into said frame, each of said second pair of legs comprising a rearward leg, said  
first pair of legs being independently pivotal about said frame from said second pair of legs;

a journaled member provided at the distal ends of each leg; and

10 a control system adapted to selectively pivot said first pair of legs to a stowed  
position and to selectively pivot said second pair of legs to a stowed position in said frame.

18. The undercarriage according to Claim 17, wherein said control system is further adapted to selectively lengthen or shorten said legs to adjust the height of said support base.

19. The undercarriage according to Claim 17, wherein said control system includes a plurality of actuators, said actuators pivoting said legs.

20. The undercarriage according to Claim 19, wherein said actuators comprise hydraulic cylinders.

21. The undercarriage according to Claim 20, wherein each of said legs includes a cylinder, wherein said cylinders of said front legs are hydraulically coupled wherein said front legs pivot substantially in unison.

22. The undercarriage according to Claim 21, wherein said hydraulic cylinders of said front legs are physically coupled.

23. The undercarriage according to Claim 20, wherein said cylinders of said rear legs are hydraulically coupled wherein said rear legs pivot substantially in unison.

24. The undercarriage according to Claim 19, wherein each of said legs includes a pivot actuator and a height adjustment actuator, said adjustment actuators for adjusting the length of said legs wherein the height of said support base can be adjusted.

25. The undercarriage according to Claim 24, wherein said pivoting and said height adjusting is independent.

26. The undercarriage according to Claim 24, wherein said height adjustment actuators of at least said front legs are coupled wherein said front legs lengthen substantially in unison.

27. The undercarriage according to Claim 17, wherein said support base includes a plurality of journaled members, said journaled members of said support base enabling a person to translate said undercarriage across a support surface when said first pair of legs are pivoted to their stowed position.